

DIVISION OF MINES	CHAPTER: VI Operator Assistance
PROCEDURES MANUAL	
	PROCEDURE NO: 1.06.03
	ISSUE DATE: January 1, 1997
SUBJECT: Mining Near Gas Wells	LAST REVISED: 10/00

OBJECTIVE AND INTENT

To provide an effective and consistent method to evaluate requests to mine near vertical ventilation holes and gas or oil wells and requests to mine through plugged vertical ventilation holes and plugged gas or oil wells to verify locations and mapping and provide for the safety of miners.

GENERAL

1. Applications and notifications may be submitted by certified mail to the Division of Mines in Big Stone Gap or hand delivered to the Keen Mountain Office, the Big Stone Gap DM office or the Client Assistance Center in Big Stone Gap.
2. The Division of Mines will simultaneously review applications, notifications, and plans with MSHA where this procedure is applicable.
3. Interested persons (Operator, UMWA, MSHA, DGO, etc.) may request conferences regarding applications, notifications, and plans, if they so desire.

PROCEDURE

1. MINING NEAR GAS OR OIL WELLS AND VERTICAL VENTILATION HOLES
 - The mine operator must give notice by certified mail to the Chief and the vertical ventilation hole operator prior to mining within 500 ft. horizontally of such hole. The mine operator must give notice by certified mail to the Chief, the gas or oil well operator and the gas and oil inspector prior to mining within 500 ft. horizontally of such well. The Division of Mines will acknowledge receipt of the required notification in writing.

- The mine operator must apply to the Chief for permission to mine horizontally within 200 ft. of a vertical ventilation hole and gas or oil well. Notice of such must also be sent to the operator of the VVH or gas or oil well. See Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells. Actions of the Division of mines include:
 - a. The Operator Assistance Group of the Division of Mines will review the application for accuracy, content, and whether the application meets the requirements of the Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells.
 - b. The Operator Assistance Group will complete a GPS survey of the VVH or gas or oil well in question and of the mine coordinate system base point if not already completed.
 - c. If any objection or objections are filed, the Chief will notify the applicant for permit of the nature of the objections and provide for a hearing as required by the regulations.
 - d. The Division of Mines will notify the operator in writing of its approval or disapproval of the application no sooner than 10 days of the receipt of the petition.

- The mine operator must give notice to the Chief, the hole or well operator, and the Gas and Oil Inspector when the operator plans to mine within 200 feet below a seam that is being vented by a vertical ventilation hole, coalbed methane well, or gob well. See Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells. Actions of the Division of Mines include:
 - a. Determine whether the hole or well operator has objections to the mine operator's plans.
 - b. Hold conference or approve request per Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells.

2. MINING THROUGH PLUGGED VERTICAL VENTILATION HOLES AND GAS WELLS

- Mine operators who are planning to mine through a plugged vertical ventilation hole or plugged gas or oil well must apply to the Chief as required by the Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells. Actions of the Division of Mines include:
 - a. The Operator Assistance Group will make every effort to determine if the hole has been plugged according to plans.
 - b. Determine whether the well or hole operators have any objection to the mine operator's plans.
 - c. Approve, deny, or schedule a hearing according to the Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Wells.
- A mine operator who is expressly drilling gas wells or vertical ventilation holes for the purposes of degassing the seam in which the operator is conducting mining may, in lieu of the above requirements, submit mine wide plans as follows:
 - a. Written plan which includes:
 - (1) Description of plugging methods. Include details such as plugging materials and distance above and below seam. Multiple plugging techniques may be included.
 - (2) Minimum time frame between drilling through seam and mining through plugged well or VVH.
 - (3) Description of surveying techniques used to determine surface and underground location and surveying accuracy maintained.
 - b. Map, submitted annually, which shall show:
 - (1) Surface and seam locations of existing wells with depth of hole and depth below seam.
 - (2) Location of projected wells.
 - c. When a projected well is drilled the operator shall notify the Division of Mines (by fax or mail) and provide the seam location, depth of hole, and depth below the seam.

- d. When a well is drilled that is not projected or a projected well is moved more than 3 feet from the planned location the operator shall notify the Division of Mines (by fax or mail) and provide the surface location, seam location, depth of hole and depth below seam. The operator shall also provide a mine map or partial mine map showing the location of the well.
- e. A map will be kept up-to-date in the mine office which will show well locations and indicate which wells are plugged.
- f. By submitting the above plan the operator will meet the requirements of the Regulations Governing Vertical Ventilation Holes and Mining Near Gas Oil Wells. The operator may still be required to meet obligations to other parties as required in the regulations.
- g. This plan will be incorporated as part of the approved mine bleeder plan.